

OPINION

Ready to help Lynn reach its full potential

A generation ago, many industrial cities thrived across the commonwealth with factories and mills employing thousands of people who worked to produce textiles, shoes, plastics, and much more. Industrial manufacturing was the foundation for these cities and instrumental in driving the state's regional economies; yet, over the past several decades, with a shift in the economy, the landscape of these cities has changed, in some instances leaving vacant buildings or land where once thriving companies grew. Governor Patrick and I understand and recognize these communities have significant economic potential, which is why we are investing an unprecedented amount of attention, planning, and funding to support the growth of these "Gateway Cities."

The City of Lynn, bustling with shoe manufacturers during the 19th and 20th centuries, has been working hard to capitalize on its natural strengths and the Patrick-Murray Administration is committed to helping. After numerous visits to Lynn with state Senator McGee and state Representatives Walsh, Fennell and Ehrlich, we can see an economic revival along the city's waterfront that will create a gateway for regional growth throughout the North Shore.

By partnering with the state and federal government as well as the private sector, Lynn is advancing two initiatives. First, we are working to secure commuter ferry service to Boston by 2013. Second, by working with the state legislative delegation, the city, and the Lynn Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC), we will revitalize more than 350 acres of undeveloped land in the city.

As chair of the Seaport Advisory Council, I work with local mayors, city planners, and harbor masters to invest in infrastructure in our seaport communities. The council, state legislative delegation, and I were recently in Lynn to celebrate the completion of Phase II of the Blossom Street Extension project and announce over \$3 million to support Phase III of the infrastructure project. This reconstruction of the boat ramp will substantially enhance the Blossom Street Waterfront Facility, which will soon be



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home to a ferry docking station. These improvements along the waterfront will pave the way for commuter ferry service between Lynn and the Boston Harbor.

Transportation is the enabling network of our economy. The more transportation options these regions have, the more these regional economies will grow. For Lynn, creating a 30-minute ferry commute into Boston's downtown will provide new transportation alternatives for commuters and tourists, relieving congestion along the Route 1 corridor that can sometimes result in commutes well over an hour between Lynn and Boston. Adding ferry service will lead to increased economic activity, job creation, and business development on the North Shore.

Lynn is also home to more than 350 acres of land, perhaps one of the largest contiguous undeveloped and under-utilized parcels of land in New England, if not the Eastern Seaboard. Neighboring the Blossom Street Waterfront Facility and the Seaport Marina, this valuable land has the potential to spur significant job creation and private sector investment opportunities. In 2009,

our Administration awarded Lynn a \$2.5 million Growth District Initiative Grant to relocate two 115 kilovolt (kV) power lines that ran along this vacant area on the waterfront. By transferring the power lines to the opposite side of the Lynnway, the 350 acres of undeveloped land is now open for the city to embark on significant redevelopment plans. Our administration will work closely with the city and state legislative delegation to move forward on this major economic development initiative.

Through our strong partnership with the state legislative delegation and the city, we are also investing beyond Lynn's waterfront. Supported by the Administration's Accelerated Bridge Program, construction is underway on the General Edwards Bridge and the \$10 million bridge rehabilitation project will be completed in 2014. At North Shore Community College's Lynn Campus, we are undertaking a \$375,000 study to potentially expand the campus. This investment in higher education builds on approximately \$1.5 million in energy and water improvements and another \$300,000 for deferred maintenance on the campus. We are also committed to retaining and creating jobs in Lynn. For example, MassDevelopment partnered with the Lynn Community Health Center to provide \$6.5 million in bond financing, creating 50 new jobs and retaining over 300 jobs. MassDevelopment also awarded \$4.5 million in bond financing to the Greater Lynn Senior Services, retaining more than 650 jobs.

As a Gateway City, Lynn offers tremendous opportunity for growth and development in the region, and we will focus on securing Lynn's economic future. I am confident that together with the state legislative delegation, congressional delegation, local officials and business leaders, we will carry this momentum forward and create lasting long-term growth and economic success in Lynn.

Timothy P. Murray is lieutenant governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He is also the chairman of the Seaport Advisory Council.